

But Republicans block DRILL Act that would accelerate production, increase supply

(Washington, D.C.) -- U.S. Congressman Jason Altmire (PA-04) today voted for legislation that would help speed up domestic oil and gas production. The Drill Responsibly in Leased Lands (DRILL) Act (H.R. 6515) would accelerate the development of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A), 20 million acres of land that contain an estimated 10.6 billion barrels of oil. It would also encourage oil companies to drill on 68 million acres of federal land that they are currently leasing, which could yield 4.8 million barrels of oil a day. Drilling in these two areas would nearly double domestic oil production.

Since the NPR-A has already been designated for oil and gas production, the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration estimates that it could deliver oil to the marketplace in three to five years. Unfortunately, the DRILL Act failed to gain the two-thirds majority it needed to pass today. The vote was 244-173.

“For the second time in a month, Republicans have blocked legislation that could help increase domestic drilling,” Altmire said. **“I voted for the DRILL Act because I want the big oil companies to increase their domestic drilling as soon as possible. Drilling in the NPR-A and on the 68 million acres of federal land that these companies are currently leasing is one of the fastest ways to get more domestically produced oil on the market.”**

“Drilling alone, of course, will not solve America's energy crisis,” Altmire continued. **“I also want to increase our investment in clean coal, nuclear energy and the other forms of alternative energy so we can end America's costly addiction to oil and achieve energy independence.”**

The DRILL Act also bans the export of Alaskan oil to ensure that it will go to benefit Americans. In 2000, about seven percent of crude oil production from the Alaskan North Slope was exported to South Korea, Japan and China.